

Two-week Bee Gees Special starts today: Robert Stigwood, their manager, who charted their rise to fame, talks about the Bee Gee personalities he knows . . .



ROBIN GIBB is gifted with one of the finest pop voices of all time. I stress the word "pop" since I'm not attempting to compare him with Mario Lanza or an operatic bassist. Robin, though, has more soul in his little finger than the whole of the Tamla Motown record label.

Everybody, of course, will dismiss this as absurd. But I believe it. Robin's voice is utterly sensational.

But although I and others rave about his voice, Robin has an incredible persecution complex. He tends to think that the whole world is against him. He has no confidence at all and can be hurt by the pettiest of remarks, which is silly, since every artist must expect to receive a few knocks. Robin, though, gets unbelievably upset. For example, if a journalist with whom he is friendly turns round and says something bad about his performance, Robin takes it as a personal grudge against him.

Perhaps this is why he is such a hypochondriac. Actually he is as healthy as an ox, but he is forever fretting about his health. It reflects, perhaps, in the fact that he keeps a close check on everything that is happening for the Bee Gees. He has a private catalogue of every song the Gibb brothers have written since the age of eight and he documents the chart returns from every country around the world.

He is also the most explosive of the Bee Gees. He can be impatient over the smallest points. Of course he had a recent row with me over the decision not to put "Lamplight" on the A-side of the new single.



Robin: fretting about his health

But I haven't released a single yet that the whole group have liked. Somebody is always going to be unhappy. This time it was Robin, yet fortunately I usually make the right decision because 25 million singles later no one can be really unhappy about my choice.

But perhaps I'm talking too critically of Robin. For the fact is that he has an incredible and wonderful imagination. This is shown in the lyrics of his composition, "Odessa"—the title track of the new LP—which is, I think, one of the finest pop songs

ever written.

He's also a great clown. There is a great sort of Chaplinesque quality about Robin. He has an incredible list of character interpretations. He can take off anybody.

Of course, he's come in for laughs he wasn't wanting. Like the jokes about his teeth and his hair and his traffic signals on stage. I—and he—judge it by the public reaction to his stage appearances. He gets screams and hysteria, same as the others.

The thing is that Robin Gibb cannot be ridiculed as an artist.

MAURICE GIBB is the boy people tend to put in the background and yet his contribution is enormous because he is the arranging brain and the multi-instrumentalist of the group. Although his singing is usually restricted to singing harmonies on the choruses, in the studios his part is enormous. He plays bass, piano, organ, Mellotron, rhythm and is now lead guitarist.

Added to all this, his rapport with the two other brothers Gibb is incredible, too. The way he can translate the songs they've written into the right field for recording amazes me. It's because of this that the other two can come into a recording studio and write a song and then Maurice will instantly arrange it for immediate recording.

As a person, perhaps he's the easiest of the Gibb brothers to get on with since he is always a cheerful person. He's not as moody as Robin, for example, and he's also quite mature. As an example, on a date, when the police lose control of the crowd, Robin will get frightened, yet Maurice will merely laugh about it.

Maurice is great company as he is so easy going and he is a splendid host. I'm proud of the way he and Lulu look after people who come round to see them. His marriage will be very good for him. The additional responsibility will help to settle him down and Lulu's such a level-headed person. They make a perfect couple even though that sounds corny and, most important of all, he's very much in love with her.

He's out of his raving



Maurice: past his raving days now

stage now. As many people know, he used to drink too much. It didn't affect his work, mind you, but he has cut down now.

He's gregarious. He loves meeting people and he's fond of touring, probably for the same reason. He and Colin are both keen, whereas Barry and Robin dislike touring. He is also rather an extravagant person. He likes buying clothes and spends too much. In dress, though, he has developed tremendous good taste and for 19 years of age has become remarkably poised.

He is also terribly generous to his family and friends.

Really, Maurice is totally different from his twin brother and yet the three Gibbs are fantastically close.

Of course, they argue like mad and anybody who bursts upon them in the middle of a row would think they were about to murder each other. But two minutes later they are as thick as thieves and the closeness between them is the tremendous thing in their ability for developing harmony on their records.